UNDP

UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

Distributed on request
DP/PROJECTS/7421

ENGLISH

APPROVAL OF UNDP ASSISTANCE TO A PROJECT OF CHINA

IPF:(1992-96) $176 600 000

(CPR/91/420) - Basic Education: Administration and Teaching

Date of approval by the AC:[1/]	9 December 1992
Expected duration:	Four years
Proposed executing agency:	Government (China International Center for Economic and Technical Exchanges (CICETE))
Government implementing agency:	State Education Commission
Proposed UNDP contribution:	$3 000 000 Source of funds: IPF
Government cost sharing:	$ 230 000
Total UNDP budget:	$3 230 000

Project background

China is notable among developing countries for both the absolute size and proportional coverage of its education system. UNESCO estimates primary net enrolment ratios of 100 percent for boys and 95 percent for girls, in 1990. Gross enrolment at the secondary level now exceeds 40 percent. The Government's commitment to education is reflected in the relatively high expenditure on education which, in 1988, was estimated at approximately 12 percent of local, provincial and central Government expenditure. In addition, local communities also make substantial contribution to educational funding.

The laudable advances in educational participation and funding notwithstanding, education in China is currently facing a number of difficult problems. Firstly, the high over-all participation rates in primary school mask substantial educational disparities between urban and rural, majority and minority populations, and between genders. Secondly, the high enrolment ratios do not reflect irregular attendance and very high repetition and drop-out rates in the primary education. It is estimated that fewer than 60 percent of children complete a full (5-6 year) primary cycle.

Following the initiation of economic reform policies in early 1980s, the Government announced in May 1985 its "Decision to Reform the Education Structure". The decision called, among others, for provision of nine years of basic education for all school-age children and education management reform at all levels. The Compulsory Education Act passed in April 1986 sets the target of all children completing elementary school by year 2000, and nine-year basic education by year 2010. The 1985 decision also called for a more decentralized approach to education management and the delegation of management and financial responsibility for schools to provincial and local governments.

[1/] This Fact Sheet reflects the status of the project/revision at the time it was approved by the Action Committee; modifications to the project/revision may have occurred subsequently.

Interest as to the quality and equity of education has been heightened by the 1990 World Conference on Education for All held in Jomtien, Thailand. Senior Chinese Government officials attended the meeting at which measures were taken to ensure that EFA objectives are achieved and equal access to basic education programmes prevails in both rural and urban areas.

To facilitate (compulsory education) incremental implementation of nine year basic education, strength vocational and technical education, and renewed emphasis to adult literacy (basic education), improve science and technology education at all levels, and as well as the quality of higher education, introduce new curriculum for primary and secondary schools starting in 1993 and more diversified media of curricular materials (curriculum reform), upgrade teachers to meet minimum qualifications and in-service training to support curricular reforms (teacher training), and improve school conditions and management skills (education administration), the Government requested UNDP assistance under the present approval.

Description of project

The proposed programme will support the plan objectives in the three critical areas of education administration, teacher training and science education. The immediate objectives are to: (a) improve the administration of primary and middle schools and the quality and availability of programmes for training of school administrators; (b) enhance the quality and effectiveness of basic education through curriculum development and training of primary and middle school teachers; (c) improve science education through the development of innovative techniques and materials for middle-school level science subjects; and (d) promote a broader approach to science education, by establishing linkage with the Education 2,000 Science and Technology Literacy initiative. The programme elements will be coordinated and reinforced by a core programme which will be based in the State Education Commission (SEdC) and will ensure necessary linkages and feedback on an ongoing basis.

Five educational institutions and five departments of the State Education Commission (SEdC) will be involved in the implementation of the programme. Although the educational institutions are based in urban areas (Beijing, Zhangzhou, Nanjing, Wuhan), specific targets (up to 50 percent) have been set for training of administrators and teachers from the less developed areas. Likewise, targets have also been set for training of female administrators and teachers (up to 25 percent). In developing curriculum and training materials, emphasis will be given to innovative approaches, particularly with respect to science education.

Inputs

UNDP will provide approximately 45 work-months of services of international consultants; long-term fellowship training for 60 staff members; ten specially designed study tours for 50 staff members; a series of in-country workshops; and computer, audio-visual and printing equipment for five institutions participating in the programme.

Financial data

	$
Personnel	569 000
Training	1 405 000
Equipment	1 236 000
Miscellaneous	20 000
Total	3 230 000